

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 5, with the following amended paragraph:

It is an advantage of the switching device and method according to the present invention that it is found that starting from a contention free guaranteed throughput data schedule as a basis for the best effort data scheduling, the guaranteed throughput data schedule simply forms a boundary condition for the best effort data scheduling. This way the guaranteed throughput and best effort scheduling are combined. The border condition then only involves a one step reservation of input and output lines. This saves the burden of hardware and software and control in the data switching device, ~~but~~ and also shortens the latency, which is defined as the time a data packet spends in the data switching device. ~~Furthermore no,~~ Furthermore, no more or less soft priorities have to be defined and processed, which saves even more software, hardware, and associated control in the data switching device according to the invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

An example will explain the combined or intertwined scheduling of GT and BE. Suppose as exemplified by FIGS. 1(a) and 1(b) for the purpose of this simple example, that the arity of the router switch 5 is four, that is the switch has four inputs, numbered I1 . . . I4 and four outputs, numbered O1 . . . O4. The scheduling is such that the GT control means 6-1 first reserve a GT connection lets say between input I3 and output O1, as shown in FIG. 2(a). A situation indicated by crossed BE input buffers 3, meaning that the buffers 3 are filled with data, as schematically shown in FIG. 1(a), would result in a so called bipartite graph for the BE scheduling as shown in FIG. 1(b). For example 3,2 in input buffer 3 means that a data connection from input I3 to output O2 is wanted. At the side of input I1 three BE input buffers 3 would request data communication to outputs O1, O2 and O3. Input I2 does not show any request. Input I3 would request data

communication to outputs O2 and O4, and input I4 only requests data transfer to output O4. Due to the contention free GT scheduled connection--indicated by an encircled 1--any BE request from input I3 to any output is disabled. This means that in the request step the BE requests from input I3 to outputs O2 and O4 are being ignored, which simplifies the BE scheduling, because a smaller amount of inputs have to be taken into account during the BE request phase. The next step is the grant step, wherein first any BE grant from output O1 to any input is disabled, which again simplifies the further BE scheduling, because a smaller amount of outputs have to be taken into account for the BE scheduling during the BE grant phase. The ~~then~~ next step is the BE accept step, where by way of example the data connection between output O2 and input I1 is accepted. Thereafter the actual GT and BE data communication may be effected. The triplet of the steps Request, Grant and Accept may be repeated one or more times, in order to improve the scheduling further.

Please replace the abstract with the amended abstract on the following page: